Thomas. What shall we do with the canal?

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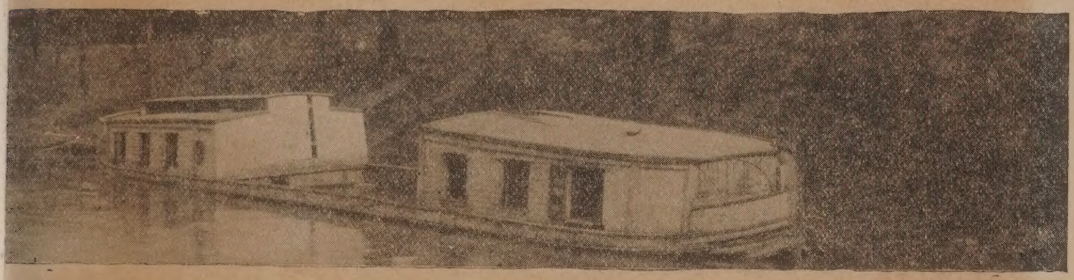
What Shall We Do With the Canal?



Abandoned Ohio State Repair Boat sunk in Canal at Dayton, Ohio, opposite Fairgrounds
From photograph taken March 7, 1911

April 24, 1911

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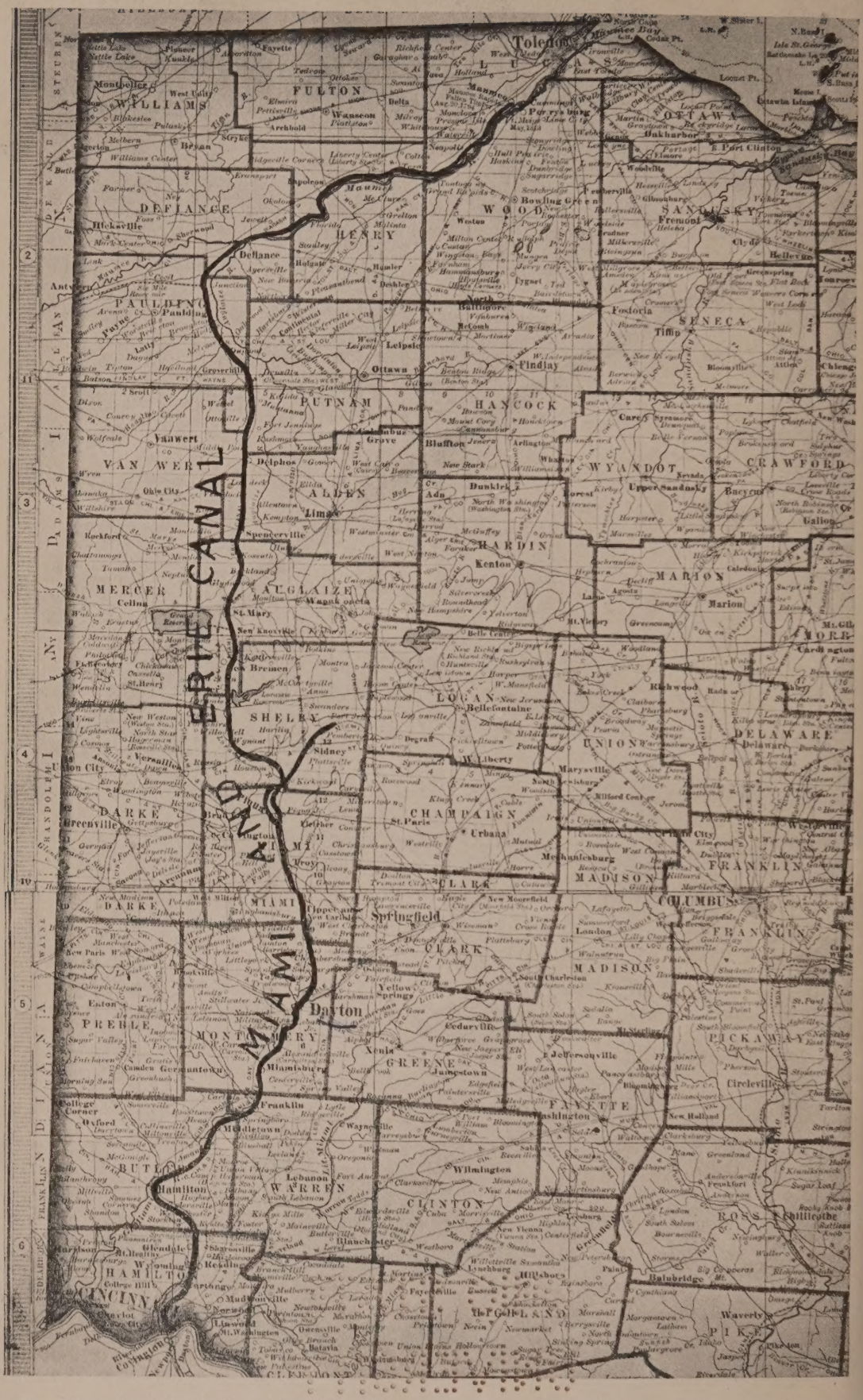

The Miami and Erie Canal is 242 miles in length, not including branches, and runs through 15 counties.

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April 10, 1911.

To the Board of Directors of

The National Cash Register Co.

Gentlemen:

In compliance with your request, I republish articles which appeared in the newspapers four years ago in regard to the canal. I have omitted in this any specific injury which the canal is doing the property of your Company and to the railroad company adjoining, also the bridges, the fills, the interference with the extension of your buildings, and all questions of that kind, as these are all too familiar to you already.

Respectfully,

A. A. Thomas.

I have illustrated this with a few photographs which may be new to some of your people.

A. A. T.

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(The following letter was published in the Dayton Journal, January 10, 1906)

A. A. Thomas on the Canal

Former City Solicitor of Dayton Takes a Crack at the Waterways

January 9, 1906.

To the Editor of the Journal:

Will you allow me a word about your criticism of Mr. John H. Patterson's opinion that the canal ought not to be repaired for water transportation; also about what you think is the interest of the N. C. R. Co. in the matter.

1. The National Cash Register Company has within easy reach a good and sufficient right of way for a railroad connection with all the roads in Dayton. In getting this switch connection, which is greatly needed, there

Looking North at Dayton, Near Fairgrounds. Showing canal filling up with sand bars and mud soon after being dredged—the left bank is the towpath which the dredge covered up. It was impassable to horses for months.

From photograph taken April 5, 1904

has been undue delay, but it will come; and it is something easier to get than any railroad in the canal bed proper.

2. If the canal was revived and boats going, it would be as great a benefit to the Cash Register Company as to anyone else in Dayton; for this

Company owns a larger canal frontage than any business concern in this county. On its own land, near the factory, it built on the canal a wharf and a freight station, and this was done while the water was in the canal and the boats carrying freight. **It was found to be worthless for any business use.** and we have as much heavy freight as others. The trouble is, of course, the cost of the transfer of freight from the canal boats to the railroads and other means of communication. **This makes canal freight transportation slow, costly and out of date.**

Cost of Transfer Important

3. Some people think the cost of transfer to and from the canal or to and from freight cars is not important if the freight rate is cheap. The notion is

From photograph of Miami & Erie Canal taken July, 1904, showing sand bar filling up almost entire canal, a fair sample of sand bars between Cincinnati and Toledo.

a great mistake. Some of us saw that idea worked out in the narrow gauge railroad system; and we saw twelve million dollars of New England capital thrown away in that belief.

4. Did this State ever witness a worse abuse of public and of local interest than in the whole proceedings of that electric mule? Whoever believed that anyone expected or intended an electric mule to tow a canal boat?

5. The real public question is, Should the Miami Canal be revived, and can it be made to pay? Or if it did pay, is there any public benefit possible

which will be worth the great expenditure of public money required? There are good reasons why Mr. John H. Patterson's opinion on this subject is worth more than what you seem to assume it is. He was for five years canal collector in Dayton. This made him every day measure canal freight, and brought him into acquaintance with all men of every class who knew anything about this matter as a business question or a public use. He came to the conclusion that canals were of no value either for profit in operation or of service in local business interests. He came to this conclusion long before he had any cash register business. I have heard it discussed by him and others long enough to feel sure that his opinion in the matter is right. What freight is there that the canal can carry which would justify the expense of its maintenance and operation by the public? In the last

Canal South of Fairgrounds, Dayton, Ohio

From photograph taken July, 1904

years, before boats ceased running through Dayton, there was almost no freight they could get except lumber and ice. Today freight in lumber would be almost nothing, and the carriage of ice in two or three months of the year wouldn't pay one dollar in 20 of what the expense to the State of maintaining such transportation would be.

Because of the public indignation at the electric mule steal, the people are ready to begin public expenditures again upon the canal. They are starting out on the wrong road; and will in time return footsore and tired, and

the whole thing will drift back to where it is; for the public will tire of paying money, raised by taxation, for purposes which bring no return. Judge Cooley, of Ann Arbor, said: "The sting of taxation is wastefulness."

Conditions Different in New York

6. People say New York has voted to revive its canals, therefore we ought to. The late Hon. Abram Hewitt, of New York, in one of the most elaborate and able papers printed about public affairs in the last ten years, pretty clearly demonstrated that this proposition, even in New York, was a great business mistake. Yet we must remember the situation of New York in this respect is very different from what it is with us. The enormous food

In the center of Dayton at Fifth Street, the Miami & Erie Canal is a nasty sewer and a menace to health, and injures property which would increase in value for manufacturing purposes if Canal was abandoned

From photograph taken August 22, 1904

products and tonnage of all the Northwest must come to market; and en-route it naturally, if not of necessity, accumulates at the east end of the great lakes. There will be other competing transit routes and export points on the Gulf and elsewhere south of New York, all of which wants this business; nearly the whole business community in New York has some interests in holding this traffic and bringing it where it may be dealt with at New York City. Perhaps this is the reason why the public can afford such a great annual expenditure to keep this tonnage by freight. No such reason and no such state of facts exist at Dayton, at Cincinnati, at Toledo, or anywhere along the Miami and Erie Canal; nor is there even likely to be.

A. A. THOMAS

The Canal—Past and Present

(Written by A. A. Thomas for publication January 16, 1906, but not heretofore published)

To the Editor Dayton Journal:

I want to say a few words more on the canal question; and especially about some things that have appeared in the Journal on the subject since my other statement.

1. What I or any one else may think on the subject may not be important, but this business community is greatly concerned to know what the facts are, what is proposed to be done and what such proposals involve, if some decision is going to be reached at Columbus about canal matters this winter.

2. The Ohio Canals were built by a good public enterprise at public cost between 1820 and 1830. There were then no railroads in the State. The products of this valley, then wholly agricultural, were unsalable or had to be floated at great cost and risk to New Orleans. All goods the stores sold were brought here from Philadelphia by wagons. In those days, and up to 1850, and perhaps 1860, the Ohio Canals were invaluable for transportation to the State and were worth all they cost. **Railroads supplanted them; killed them, and this has been true ever since in every State in the Union that had a canal;** except at a few spots like at the Soo, or between Buffalo and New York that were connecting points between enormous lines of modern traffic. **In what state in the Union today is there a canal that is in either valuable or profitable use?**

Indiana Canal Bed Profitably Used

3. The State of Indiana and the City of Indianapolis used to be in just the fix we are. The State owned a canal running from Cincinnati to Indianapolis and had a valuable right of way in both cities. Upon this now there is a splendid, well equipped railroad which serves the public well in carrying freight and sends its little switches into many factories and business connections. The old canal bed in part, is the main and valuable city sewer and carrier of flowage water. If any one would go to Indianapolis today, take this away and substitute canal boats, there is not a citizen there who would not say, you are turning the hands of the clock back forty years.

4. The turning over of the management of the canal to lessees, was not "an infamous job." You use the newspaper freedom of expression which reminds us of a Democratic newspaper talking about Republican County Officials. The transaction in its intent and purpose was clean, honest and proper. It was an attempt of the State to substitue able and efficient private business management for public incapacity in business management. It is true the experiment was a failure because no such private management will

make the enormous repairs and renewals which ownership of the canals need. No moneys but public moneys will ever be wasted on such a purpose. The fact is no management of the public canals in Ohio can make them either useful or profitable to the State or anyone else.

Victim of Time and Competition

5. I think you are not right when you say, "In the memory of no one living today, the canals in Ohio have not had good management." It was

A sample view. Repair of break in the Canal, and digging up sediment, all of this at the taxpayers' expense.

From photograph taken September, 1905

for a long series of years as efficient as any business that the State could handle. What you claim may be true during the past ten years, for during this time they have had nothing to do. What reason have you or we to expect that such public service will be any better in the future than it was in the past under Governors Nash, Bushnell, McKinley, Foraker, Foster, Bishop and Hays. The Miami and Erie Canal petered out not because of its management, but broke down of its own weight; bitten out by the tooth of time. Here as everywhere they were made useless by railroad competition.

Enormous Expenditure Necessary to Change

6. Neither you nor anyone else claims that the canal can be made profitable by mule power transportation. They are to be revived and the boats are to be driven by steam power you say. I suppose this is true

and Mr. J. E. McCammon makes a fair and full disclosure of what this requires. It requires that the canal be widened to seventy feet; be made proportionately deeper " and that all permanent crossings of the canal be removed or made swinging or draw bridges." Do you propose that this shall only be done between Dayton and Cincinnati where the freight is heaviest? But Canal Counties north of us pay the same State tax we do and the legislature is not likely to make a favorite of a few counties and leave out the rest. If the canals are changed so as to use steam power the change must come on their entire length whether they are used at all. To make the change in the canal required, means an enormous expenditure, the figures of which no one likes to talk about, for we needn't know yet as it is to be paid for in State bonds. The widening and deepening required will nearly double the water capacity of the present canal channel. This means that all its banks must be widened, every culvert set lower and every lock rebuilt and greatly enlarged. The new steam boats are to be double deckers or two stories, and all permanent bridges across the canal in Dayton and elsewhere are to be removed and movable bridges substituted. Who wants that? Has no one considered the public damage, inconvenience and obstruction which will follow the removal of the present canal bridges for "turn down or swinging bridges instead," at Main, Warren, Jefferson, Fifth, Third, Second and First Streets in Dayton.

Water Rights Protected

7. At the urgent demand of this community, and of the City Council, and of all the abutting property owners, Col. Corwin and I brought about the vacation for navigation purposes all of the eastern branch of this Miami Canal in the City of Dayton. This was the branch extending from the junction near Sixth Street upwards across Wayne Avenue and Third Street and Second Street and on north. It is hard to measure the saving in money and public convenience, as well as the great promotion of all abutting private business interests in consequence of this step. The water rights were not impaired but preserved and protected. There is no reason why the water rights all along the canal should be destroyed or impaired by any abandonment of water transportation. Would all the business interests in that neighborhood want to give up their railroad switches and go back to canal boats. The whole canal bed and route through Dayton is a business region. The business property, lots and buildings abutting on it have generally gone into decay and lost value. That would all be improved in value and come into active use for business and factory purposes if they had convenient railroad sidings where they wanted them, instead of canal water.

8. I understand the suggestion of Mr. Patterson was that the whole canal bed ought to be changed into a railroad route and tracks which would

give abutters this service. It would carry under grade all the heavy train service through Dayton.

Belt Road Not Practical

9. You say taking the heavier railroad trains through Dayton below grade on the canal bed is not needed, because there's going to be a belt railroad around the city. I knew once some enterprising railroad men who came here for that purpose and they had the money at command to build it. They paid for the preliminary inspection and survey which showed the plan to be impracticable. Where is such a road to go? Between the City and Oakwood, or between the built up City and Ohmer's Park, or would you run it

A bad break in the Canal where more of the people's money was uselessly spent for repairs.
From photograph taken September, 1905

further back and have the trains climbing for a mile or two the high hills and then go down again? Heavy railroad freight trains when they come to Dayton, will follow the valleys of the rivers; and they will not climb adjoining hills. They will not cross Wolf Creek, Stillwater, the Miami and Mad River by any "belt."

10. Intelligent men will study this canal question as it affects us locally; and from the point of view of the interest of the State as a whole.

State Should Keep Right of Way

11. I think we may all agree, for you to say the State should never part ownership with this great and valuable right of way which belongs to the people. What we further agree upon is indignation at all attempts to steal it. I don't know that business interests require the State should compete in transportation between Dayton and Cincinnati through Ohio. If this is a fact they had far better serve the public and do this competition by a railroad than by a canal in operation. The cost of such a railroad construction would be no greater than the canal it would seem. The State would be just as skill-

Looking East from the Aqueduct Lock at Dayton, showing valuable factory sites with no railroad connection.

From photograph taken March 23, 1911

ful in building and managing a railroad as in maintaining and operating a canal. Or if the State did not want to go into business, let it publicly lease the road under conditions which will maintain it and give the State all possible revenue. The City of Boston would not sell its Common, but it greatly helped all people there by leasing part of it for street railroad terminals. The revenue from such a railroad would be little at first but the State could own for all time its invaluable right of way, and as years went on the State would have a revenue instead of an annual loss.

Taxation Canal Zone

12. Judge Dennis Dwyer was candid, as he always is, and comes out with a plan which faces the facts and avoids the issue of bonds. He suggests a taxation canal zone of five miles in width on each side of the canal on which annual levy should be made of taxation enough to meet the great rebuilding expenditure and maintenance. Without this a tax levy shall fall on all real and personal property. He calculates this levy would not be more than five mills annually.

If there is one thing reasonably certain in this city, it is that the taxes ought not to be increased. The levy this year is 2.82.

When I was in Ireland, our boatman on Lake Killarney boasted much about Daniel O'Connell, who came from that region. I asked him,"What did he ever do for you." "He reduced the taxes in all Ireland, Sir," was the reply, "before his day if a man raised three bunches of oats the Government took one for its tax." This seemed to me then an oppressive burden. The best rate of interest that the people get in Dayton on the money saved is five per cent. The Building Associations don't pay more. The rate of taxation is over 2½ per cent.; so that in Dayton now the taxes take half of the income from money invested. Shall we make them more to build a steam canal which is of no use and forces us to use raised bridges at all street crossings? Let us remember too, that the large taxation and expenditure such as is proposed, crowds out other better and necessary things. Everybody wants the Riverdale Hydraulic, driveways and park through and along Stillwater. $40,000.00 is now necessary for this of money that the City Council hasn't got. All Dayton wants new and expended school instructions; some people want a City Hall. It would not be hard to make a list of good and needed things. Shall we postpone all these and build a steam barge canal?

A. A. THOMAS

Side View of Aqueduct at Dayton, Ohio. No water has passed through for years. Shortage of water was one of the causes and yet we are talking of building a ship canal which would require more water

From photograph taken March 23, 1911

About the Right of Way of the Miami and Erie Canal

(Written by A. A. Thomas, February 1906)

From Dayton to Toledo is 211 miles; and to Cincinnati is 60 miles, so that the State owns this canal and right of way from Cincinnati to Toledo through Dayton, about 270 miles in length. I understand that the State owns it in fee simple and not merely for canal usage. Suppose the State

Part of Aqueduct and Canal in Dayton looking North—Abandoned. No water in it for years.

From photograph taken March 23, 1911

should decide that, come what may, no part of it should ever be sold. In this case the first duty of the legislature should be to make an appropriation to clean it up and put it in order. The State has no right to let property which it owns be a neighborhood nuisance to anybody else. The friends of the canal argue that it is the duty of the State and interest of the people that there should be furnished along this right of way, a freight transportation which shall compete with railroads and help to moderate their charges and give them local facilities for transit. Suppose that I should say that this were to be done by a railroad instead of water transportation; what would be needed and how would that things work out?

Water Rights Protected

It is hard to conceive of a right of way better adapted for railroad uses. There are few or no high grades and there are populations and industries now all along its route whom it could serve. Suppose the State should transform the tow path and the bed of the canal into a railroad bed. All the water routes now in use could be preserved and continued in conduits. This can easily and cheaply be done and greater capacity by power or pump pressure applied. The capacity could be preserved also for sewerage through cities and towns where such use is needed. I believe this alone would be an enormous economy and convenience to tax payers and to the public in all such places. Upon this right of way railroad tracks could be placed and used. If the State want to get the true and real value of its property and make it available, this is the use to put it to. Such right of way through this city and county alone is worth a great sum of money if put to such a use.

Valuable asset to State

Do we want the State to operate such a railroad? I don't know. But a great many do want it. But if it is to be done here's the best opportunity the State will ever have in its history. If it don't want to do this itself, let the right of way and property be specified and advertised and let an operating company take it under a proper lease. For the first year and the next or several first years let there be no compensation. But after that let a rental be paid to the State. If it so provide that all the actual profits made by the lessee company should be known and fixed that would not be hard to do. Let the rental allow a business interest on the money and let all surplus profits go to the State. It is altogether possible that a trolley and electric power might be so put in use which would be economical and answer every use.

Local Terminal Switching

There might be a trolley car service here on the route itself and thorough and more practical local switching service of ordinary railroad cars. The greatest value of such a route ought to be its terminal switch or connecting road to all railroad lines that touch or cross the canal. Let us apply the case to what we know most about and that is the canal route in this city and in this county. Suppose there were such a line of railroad near Franklin, through Miamisburg, W. Carrollton, W. Alexandria, Dayton and on north, and if cars from all the lines that enter Dayton: C. H. & D., Big Four, Pennsylvania, and others as well as from all the trolley lines could be brought down and switched in and out at W. Carrollton, would property there be more or less valuable. Is there room for two answers to such a question and could not the public there have transit for passengers north and south as on any trolley road. Does the State want to destroy invested value in railroad property

parallel with the canal? I don't say so. But many people think so and if they want to go ahead they can serve the public best and change over the loss to profit by working a railroad instead of a canal. The canal route through Dayton is through the business region wholly. If it is not contiguous to railroads and has a canal frontage only the property is depreciating

Improve Property Values

and generally going into delay. If to all these business places switch tracks and railroad connections were given that would connect them without transferring or blocking cars to all railroad lines to and from the main railroads that enter Dayton this property could come into profitable use. They nearly all could be rebuilt or changed in such a way that siding from such a railroad in or near abutting premises could be had everywhere. It seems to me that this is the way to make this route convenient to the public and profitable instead of an added expense to the tax payers.

Change Water to Electric Power

Probably most of the water power in the canal could be best utilized in supplying this electric power locally and to frequent points along the canal route. I think the level of the hailroad tracks might be dropped enough to leave us permanent bridges although they must be elevated, they need not be moving bridges. It would seem altogether practicable that such a line could be operated without arousing the hostility of other railroads. It would give them invaluable points of distribution and access which they could never have in many cases.

A. A. THOMAS.

Abandoned Ohio State Repair Boat in Canal at Dayton, Ohio, opposite Fairgrounds and the State is still repairing the Canal.
From photograph taken March 7, 1911

Canal from a Practical View—Cincinnati Enquirer, January 29, 1911

The following report on the canal was issued yesterday by the Taxpayers' Association:

"If our canal system in its present shape afforded great conveniences or competition in shipping to any considerable part of Ohio, we might be ready to ignore the financial end of it. It will, however, be generally admitted that our canals at present are of value to no general interest, and at the same time are a great detriment and cause much obstruction and inconvenience to a large part of our population. This being the case, it is certainly not out of place to present some detailed statistics upon the financial end of the canal.

Immense Expenditures Made

"Astounding conditions concerning the operation of the Miami and Erie Canal have been revealed by an investigation made into the affairs of this property by the delegates of the **Taxpayers' Association to the Association for the Improvement of the Canal.** The general public, interested as it is, in seeing this useless waterway removed from within the city limits, has never been given an idea of the immense expenditures that are made on the canal every year, and of the meager returns for this great investment. The Taxpayers' Association has gone thoroughly into the study of all the features of canal operation with results that are positively appalling in their revelations of the cost to the state of maintaining this waterway, which has assumed all the phases of a fully developed incubus.

"According to the last annual report of the State Board of Public Works, the receipts from tolls on the entire canal from Cincinnati to Toledo, a distance of 244 miles, were $2,750.43 in 1909. This amount hardly met the salaries of two of the many men employed to collect tolls and look after the locks on the Cincinnati Division alone, extending from Cincinnati to W. Carrollton, a distance of 57 miles. The amount paid these two men aggregated $2,700, just $50.43 less than the tolls from the entire 244 miles of the canal, the Superintendent receiving $1700 a year and the collector at Cincinnati $1,000 a year. Other salaries paid on the Cincinnati Division were $400 per year to a collector at Middletown and $3,240 to lock-tenders and patrolmen, making a total of $6,340 paid in operatives' salaries on 57 miles

of the canal, when the revenues from tolls on the entire length of 244 miles of canal was but $2,750.43.

Shows Deficit

"However, these salaries paid out on the Cincinnati Division alone constitute but a small portion of the annual expense necessary to make possible this collection of $2,750.43 in tolls. The report for the year 1909 shows that there was paid out for salaries, maintenance of canal and repairs the sum of $77,980.43 on the 244 miles of the Miami and Erie Canal, this including only current expenses and not the special appropriations for improvements.

East End of old Lock at Aqueduct in Dayton, Ohio. Notice the bed of canal covered with grass. No water has passed through this Lock for years.
From photograph taken March 23, 1911

The total receipts for this same period from all sources were $71,657.38, of which $28,897.85 was received for water power, $13,491.99 for pipe permits, $22,682.56 for land rents, $2,092.55 for miscellaneous and $1742 for sale of lands, these receipts with $2750.43 received from tolls making up the total. This shows a deficit of $5,641.05 in receipts over current expenses for the year, exclusive of the cost of improvements.

"For the past four years, from 1906 to 1909 inclusive, the total receipts of the Miami and Erie Canal from all sources were $247,100.07. During the same period there was paid out for current expenses alone, such as salaries, repairs, etc., $318,370.17, showing a deficit in current expenditures over receipts of $71,270.10. During the same period, however, there was expended on the canal in the way of improvements the sum of $645,320.20, making the

grand total of expenditures for the four years $961,690.37 showing a total loss to the state for the four years of $714,590.30 on the millions that have been invested in the canal by the state since its construction in 1828.

Receipts Diminishing

The receipts of the canal on that portion between Cincinnati and Lockland for the year 1909 were $22,405 for land rents, water rents and pipe permits. Of this amount $7090 was collected outside the city limits. Of the $15,315 collected within the city limits, $7,432 was paid for land rents, the Pennsylvania Railroad alone paying $6,445 for the use of canal property. The remainder of the collections within the city, amounting to $7,883, was paid for water leases and pipe permits. And for this amount, secured by the state as part interest on untold millions already spent on the canal, the City of Cincinnati is compelled to endure the nuisance of having this waterway traversing its very center. Any of the water leases and pipe permits within the city limits expire within the next two years, and it is certain that a majority of these will not be renewed, so that in the future the receipts from these sources will be even smaller than at present. It is also expected that the next annual report, soon to be issued, will show an additional falling off in revenues, for the spasmodic operation of boats over only small stretches of the canal during the past year is certain to bring a further shrinkage in the tolls received from the operating of the few freight carriers that still are navigated when conditions are favorable.

"We hope that all of these factors will receive careful consideration by the present legislature. The taxpayers, as well as all other good citizens are interested in this subject. To grant the request of Cincinnati will in no wise interfere with the ship canal project, as the section we ask for could not be used for that purpose."

State Dredge Sunk in Canal off Fairgrounds, Dayton, Ohio. It cost the taxpayers thousands of dollars.
From photograph taken March 7, 1911

What a Cincinnati Business Man Says

The advantages of adequate interurban communication is shown by the following from **Mr. James P. Orr,** who views the question from the standpoint of a Cincinnati business man:

"Cincinnati merchants, wholesale and retail, are watching with keen interest the campaign which has been inaugurated by the Association for the Improvement of the Canal for the acquiring by the city of such portions of the canal property within Hamilton County as will lend itself to a plan

Second Street Canal Bridge, Dayton, Ohio, built with taxpayers' money and no boat has passed for years.
From photograph taken March 22, 1911

for building a boulevard to connect with the outlying districts and to afford an opportunity for giving interurban railway lines a rapid-transit entrance into the heart of the city over their own tracks.

"Business men of Cincinnati have long been aware of the losses they have sustained through the inadequacy of the interurban service into Cincinnati. Under existing conditions the roads catering to interurban service are practically halted at the outskirts of the city, as they are compelled to use the rails of the local traction company to the city terminals, running on the same time and speed schedules as the local cars, or being compelled to discharge their passengers on the outskirts by reason of the difference in the rail gauge between the city lines and the roads connecting Cincinnati with other prominent interurban cities.

"The effect of this condition has been to take business to interurban termini where quick transportation is possible, and away from Cincinnati. Communities which would do business in Cincinnati if all things were equal now go to Dayton or Indianapolis to trade instead of coming here, for the reason that they can reach those cities quickly by the use of interurban service right to the heart of the city, instead of being compelled to undergo a tedious ride of from 35 to 45 minutes after arriving at the city limits of Cincinnati before they reach the business center.

Passengers Handicapped

"Some idea of the handicap which this condition imposes upon Cincinnati passenger service, and, therefore, upon the business interests of the city, may be gleaned from the fact that one line the Ohio Electric Railway, which is compelled to halt at Spring Grove Avenue because of the difference in its gauge from that of the local traction company, carries in and out of Cincinnati during the year about 900,000 passengers, many of them being really suburbanites instead of interurbanites, and tens of thousands merely using the line for Sunday outings into the country during the summer months. The territory traversed by this line between Cincinnati and Dayton has a population of 608,100, yet during an entire year less than 500,000 use this line to come into and go out of Cincinnati. On the contrary, at the upper end of the line—that portion running North from Hamilton to Dayton—carries several millions of people annually, and a majority of these would come to Cincinnati to trade if it were possible to reach the center of the city as easily as it is to get to the business section of Dayton.

All Lines Affected

"And what is true of conditions on the line of the Ohio Electric Railway to Cincinnati holds good of the other interurban lines entering the city, the time necessary to come from the Spring Grove terminus of the Ohio line to Fountain Square being 45 minutes, while on the other line, the Interurban Railway and Terminal Company, the Cincinnati, Georgetown and Portsmouth, the Cincinnati, Milford and Loveland, the Cincinnati, Lawrenceburg and Aurora and the Cincinnati and Columbus roads—it requires from 35 minutes to 45 minutes to reach the center of the city after the tracks of the Cincinnati Traction Company are reached.

Advantages of Rapid Transit

"With a rapid transit entrance to Cincinnati, such as a subway in the bed of the present Canal would afford within the city limits, passengers could come from Hamilton to Fountain square in the same time that it now takes them to reach the center of the city from the city limits. The territory north of Hamilton, embracing the flourishing cities of Middletown, Franklin, Miamisburg and others, would be brought to within an hour's run

of Cincinnati while Aurora and Lawrenceburg and other Indiana cities even as far distant as Connersville would practically be made suburbs of this city so far as transportation service was concerned.

"An idea of what proper terminal facilities will do in the way of creating interurban traffic may be gleaned from the situation in Indianapolis. During the past year more than 6,000,000 people used the interurban terminals of Indianapolis, a city of 233,650 population while Cincinnati, with its 363,591 population handled less than half that number, of whom hundreds of thousands really were suburban passengers, the report of one company running to Coney Island showing that the traffic to that resort alone over this one line aggregated 290,000 passengers in 1910. The highest number of passengers carried by any Cincinnati interurban company was 1,260,000

Bimm's old Ice Pond, bordering the Canal for two-thirds of a mile, looking west from the Canal; all in the city of Dayton and would be valuable for manufacturing purposes if it had railroad connection. In the lower right hand corner is the old towpath; in the distance the Barney & Smith Car Shops.

From photograph taken March 23, 1911

which represent the total passenger lists of the three roads controlled by this Company, one running to New Richmond, one to Bethel and one to Lebanon.

"A comparison of the territory covered by the interurban lines centering in Cincinnati and those centering in Indianapolis, shows that only eight counties in Ohio and two in Indiana are served directly from Cincinnati, while the Indianapolis interurbans reach upward of 50 counties representing about 60 per cent. of all counties in the state.

Help Growth of City

"That interurbans with proper facilities are conducive to the growth of a city is shown by the last census report of the United States Government. Cincinnati with its poor interurban terminal facilities, so far as rapid entrance into the city is concerned, showed a gain of only 37,689 during the ten years from 1900 to 1910, this including annexations during that time, and representing an increase of only 12 per cent. in round numbers. During the same period Dayton, with its excellent interurban terminal facilities, increased 31,246 or 36 per cent.; Columbus, 55,951, or 44 per cent.; Hamilton, 11,365 or 47 per cent.; Lima 8785 or 40 per cent.; Springfield, 8,663, or 22 per cent.; Toledo, 36,675, or 27 per cent. and Indianapolis, 64,486, or 38 per cent. With the exception of Springfield all the cities mentioned are termini of several traction

The new concrete Lock at W. Carrollton built with the taxpayers' money, and of no practical benefit for transportation purposes.

From photograph taken March 24, 1911

systems, and their interurbans are operated under conditions which should prevail in Cincinnati.

"These facts have long been given close study by local merchants and manufacturers, who are placed in the position of being compelled to lose hundreds of thousands of dollars of business—perhaps millions—every year sim-

ply because the city afford no adequate entrance for interurban roads. And the interest which now are keeping this rich business harvest from the city, to say nothing of preventing the beautification of the city and enhancing the value of real estate in the central portion, are the few factories which use the canal for occasional transportation over a stretch of about 12 miles, and who pay to the state less revenues in a year than would come to Cincinnati in a week in the way of increased business if the canal were converted to the use of the several interurban roads now holding aloof from Cincinnati because of lack of proper entrance and terminal facilities."

The Master Plumbers' Association has adopted resolutions approving the movement to abandon the canal within the city limits.—

CINCINNATI ENQUIRER of June 29, 1911.

What Some Prominent People of Cincinnati Say

Health Officer Landis, with Sanitary Inspector Folsom, made a trip on the canal from Lockland to Mohawk bridge April 8, 1911, to take samples of the water, which they will submit to a chemical test. "The best I can say about the canal," said Mr. Landis upon his return, "is that it is rotten. I have never seen a more disgusting sight in all my life, and how anyone after making the inspection we did today can say that the canal is not a menace to health is more than I can understand, unless they have certain interests to conserve.

J. J. O'Doud, manager Havlin Hotel: "This community is practically a unit for the abandonment of the canal within the city limits."

P. Lincoln Mitchell, newly appointed Surveyor of Customs: "It would have been the best thing to encourage the park system and give an entrance to the interurban cars," he said. "It is a step forward that failed, and that is what we need in Cincinnati—the energy to go ahead and be progressive."

Dr. Frank H. Lamb, former city bacteriologist and chemist, remarked: "The canal in the city limits is nothing more than an open sewer, and that is a menace to the health of any community. The Board of Health tested the water and found it to be full of baccilli and it is especially dangerous for the children of the district who play in the water. The building of a boulevard along the path of the canal would have solved the problem of open air space for the children of that district, where there are very few parks and playgrounds."

H. Lee Early, former President of the Chamber of Commerce, said: "It is of no value commercially and all the arguments against it express my sentiments." he declared.

Mayor Schwab: "That stream is an eyesore to this city and I am disappointed that our conspicuous fellow citizen in Columbus could not see his way clear to aid his townsmen in ridding them of something that they have considered a blot on their town for years, especially in view of the fact that 19 out of every 20 residents are very anxious to see the canal done away with. I do not know what can be done to force its abandonment, but if there is any remedy it certainly ought to be made use of."

What More Prominent People of Cincinnati Say

Archbishop Moeller, in speaking of the canal question, referred to his attitude as expressed in a letter addressed to the Mohawk-West End Miami and Erie Canal Improvement Association, when he wrote: "The Miami and Erie Canal in its present condition is not only an eyesore to the people of Cincinnati and to the strangers who visit her, but also a menace to the health of our citizens and visitors. Some step surely ought to be taken to remove this cesspool from our midst."

Bishop David H. Moore said: "A boulevard in the place of the canal would be beautiful, and I have enough faith in the good sense and judgment of Cincinnatians to believe that if such a thing was undertaken it would be a delight to the people and not an eyesore."

Dr. A. B. Isham, President of the Board of Medical Directors of the City Hospital: "The canal ought to have been abandoned years ago; its continuance is a public crime."

Dr. W. D. Haines, President of the Academy of Medicine: "It is a public nuisance, a menace to health and an eyesore."

Dr. E. O. Smith, Secretary of the Academy of Medicine: "No greater menace to health exists than this polluted stream of water that is nothing but a great open sewer."

Dr. John E. Greiwe: "The canal is a frightful health-destroying nuisance and should have been abandoned long ago."

Dr. Kennon Dunham: "The canal has no earthly value as a means of transportation and is simply a stench and an abomination."

What To Do

1. Abandon it. Too slow, out of date and short of water.
2. It has no switching facilities and does no good.
3. It is a nuisance and costs the taxpayers too much money.
4. Canals first made adjoining property valuable. They now injure it.
5. Rapid steam or electric transportation will increase the value of all adjacent property.
6. Convert the hydraulic power into electric power, and use it for propelling locomotives for terminals.
7. A subway could be provided for the passage of steam railways under part of the canal in Dayton.
8. State lease sections of the canal to cities, towns and villages for transportation terminals or for park purposes, or both.
9. Between the cities and villages, lease to interurban or steam railroads.

With the Canal

10. A terminal company owned by the city, town or village, would give each factory having frontage on the canal connection with all railroads, steam and interurban.

11. The above would give numerous sidetracks for loading and unloading all kinds of merchandise, produce, coal, etc., thus cheapening it, and hence benefit the people.

12. Real estate in cities, towns and villages adjacent to the canal would be valuable for factory purposes.

13. All owners of property and all people living along the line of the canal would be especially benefited by increased transportation facilities.

14. The State would have a yearly income from the canal instead of a yearly loss. Hence all the taxpayers in the State would be benefited.

$714,000 is a small amount of money compared with the loss to the farmers

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The canal from Cincinnati to Toledo is 248 miles long, and runs through 16 counties. The farmers and other owners of property are required to keep up fences on both sides. What did it cost the property owners to build and maintain these fences during the last five years?

A total of the above losses would amount to how much yearly?

$_____

There are 275 bridges over the canal between Cincinnati and Toledo. What does it cost the towns, counties and railroads to build and maintain these bridges? $_____

What has it cost the adjoining property owners not being able to cross the canal except where bridges now are? $_____

A loss to the people of the State of Ohio within four years of $714,590.30

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